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ABSTRACT

This report provides an overview of vocational training programs and activities for Limited English Proficient (LEP) adults in Texas, with particular emphasis on the Houston and Lubbock. State policy regarding LEP adults is discussed, as are the roles of state agencies in providing services to these individuals. Statistical information concerning the LEP population is also presented. This includes selected population data on the number and national origin of LEP individuals in Houston, Lubbock, and Illinois as a whole. Also included are selected social and economic characteristics of Hispanic Texans, as well as employment data for this population. Specific programs are also reviewed. (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education) (JL)

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VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR LEP ADULTS IN TEXAS

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VOCATIONAL TRAINING FOR LEP ADULTS IN TEXAS

I. INTRODUCTION

Texas, the third most populous state in the country according to the 1980 Census, has one of the highest percentages (21.8%) of people speaking a language other than English at home (see Table 1). The percentage of the population over 18 who speak Spanish at home was 17.5%. Over one-fifth of the population was of Spanish origin, almost all of these Mexican. Some argue that these percentages from the 1980 Census should have been higher due to an undercount of minority members of the population. Whether the reported figures are accurate or not, continued immigration into Texas from Mexico in the 1980s resulted in more and more people who are limited in their English language proficiency.

TABLE 1

SELECTED POPULATION DATA FOR TEXAS: 1980 CENSUS

Total Population	14,229,191
Percentage who speak a language other than English at home	21.8
Percentage foreign born	6.0
Percentage naturalized citizens	2.3
Percentage not citizens	3.7
Percentage Spanish origin	21.0
Percentage Mexican origin	19.3
Percentage (over 18) who speak Spanish at home	17.5

According to the 1980 Census, the economic status of that segment of the population which was of Spanish origin was below that of the overall Texas population. As shown in Table 2, the median household and family incomes in 1979 for the Spanish origin population was lower than those for the total population. The percentages of families and persons below the poverty level was higher for the Spanish origin population than for the total population. Further, a much smaller percentage of the Spanish origin population over 25 were high school graduates as compared to the general population. This may account for some of the differences in the economic indicators, but it also shows that prospects for improvement in the future are less likely than for the general population.

TABLE 2

SELECTED SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SPANISH ORIGIN AND TOTAL POPULATIONS IN TEXAS

1980 CENSUS

	Spanish Origin Population	Total Population
Number	2,982,583	14,229,191
Percentage of total population	21.0	100.0
Median age (years)	22.1	28.2
Median household income in 1979	$12,312	$16,708
Median family income in 1979	$13,293	$19,618
Percentage of families below poverty	24.7	11.1
Percentage of persons below poverty	28.0	14.7
Percentage of ages 25 and over who are high school graduates	35.5	62.6
Percentage of ages 16-64 with a work disability	6.4	7.6
Percentage of persons under 18 living with both parents	78.0	77.9
Mean number of children ever born	1.75	1.40
Percentage female households, no husband present, with children under 18 years	9.9	7.6

Since 1980, the economy of Texas has declined as a result of the decrease in worldwide oil prices. Table 3 provides 1987 data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics which shows an overall unemployment rate of 8.4%, and 11.3% for the Spanish origin population. That portion of the Spanish origin population which is limited English proficient is likely to have an even higher unemployment rate, especially the recent immigrants from Mexico. These figures argue for the need for vocational training and other employment related services for the LEP population in Texas.

TABLE 3

SELECTED EMPLOYMENT DATA FOR THE STATE OF TEXAS
BY RACE AND SPANISH ORIGIN: 1987 ANNUAL AVERAGES
(in thousands)

Race/Ethnicity	Civilian Noninstitutional Population*	Civilian Labor Force		Employment		Unemployment	
		Number	Percentage of Population	Number	Percentage of Population	Number	Rate
Total	12,024	8,265	68.7	7,567	62.9	697	8.4
White	10,405	7,130	68.5	6,600	63.4	529	7.4
Black	1,360	958	70.5	806	59.2	152	15.9
Hispanic	2,697	1,769	65.6	1,569	58.2	200	11.3

Source: BLS unpublished data.

*16 years and above.

II. STATE POLICY REGARDING LEP ADULTS

A master plan for vocational education was promulgated by the State Board of Education in early 1987. The plan sets forth immediate and long-term objectives for vocational education and includes provisions for delivering programs through public school districts and public post-secondary institutions. At the post-secondary level, the plan is designed to meet the employment needs of the state for a skilled work force. The broad spectrum of student interests, abilities, and needs are to be met, while fulfilling the short-range and long-range demands of the public and private sectors. The plan calls for programs to be designed to meet the needs of special populations such as handicapped, disadvantaged, and limited English proficient individuals. LEP adults are included as one of several groups requiring special services. No priority is given to them over any of the others. There is no single mandated model for providing vocational training or other employment-related services to LEP adults. The state has left this to the discretion of local jurisdictions. Further, no leader or advocacy group at the state level has pushed for vocational services directly targeted at LEP adults. One of the goals of the master plan, however, is "to develop the most effective and cost efficient system for utilization of English as a Second Language (ESL and VESL) within ongoing post-secondary technical and vocational programs, and short-term, intensive training courses." The target dates for this goal is 1987-91.

Literacy instruction has been targeted as a major priority for adults and out-of-school youth in Texas. This is due to an economy which is changing from one dominated by oil and agriculture to a workplace dominated by technology, and the fact that 36% of adults have not completed high school. Although LEP adults will be included in the push for a more literate population, they have not been cited as a special target group for these services. LEP adults are treated at the state level as one of many groups requiring special services, but no effort has been made to give them a higher priority than any of the others. The state has left it to local jurisdictions to determine their own funding and programming priorities.

III. ROLES OF STATE AGENCIES IN SERVING LEP ADULTS

A. Higher Education Coordinating Board

The primary provider of vocational services to adults in Texas is the public community college and technical institute system operated by the Higher Education Coordinating Board. This agency is the recipient of Perkins funds for post-secondary programs. In Program Year 1989, the Higher Education Coordinating Board will receive 35% of the Perkins disadvantaged funds, while the Texas Education Agency, which administers secondary level programs, will receive 65% of the funds.

A total of 49 community colleges on 66 campuses, 4 campuses of the state technical institute system, 3 campuses of the Lamar University System, and 3 centers of the Texas Engineering Extension Service offer post-secondary degree and certificate vocational programs. These institutions receive state funding and federal Perkins funding to operate these programs. A total of 1,912 degree and certificate vocational programs were offered during the 1985-1986 academic year. During this same year, approximately 2,500 adult courses were also offered to meet unique community and industry needs. Overall, skill training and retraining were provided to over 136,000 adults in approved degree and certificate programs, and over 215,000 students enrolled in short-term adult vocational classes. These figures were cited in the Biennial Evaluation of Vocational Education, published by the State Board of Education in January 1987.

Respondents at the Higher Education Coordinating Board and State Council on Vocational Education indicated that the LEP population is one of several groups in need of services. However, no data on the number of LEP adults in need of vocational services has been collected. Thus, the Board has not identified LEP adults as a priority target group and no policy has been formulated which provides a certain percentage of dollars to serving this particular population. The local colleges and institutions individually decide how to divide the Perkins disadvantaged set-aside funds. It was stated that local jurisdictions have differing needs depending on the makeup of the local population. It is therefore left up to each college and institute to make

programming decisions based on the population and economy of the area it serves. Data were not reported in the Biennial Evaluation Report concerning the number of disadvantaged adults being served, nor the number who were limited English proficient. However, respondents at the State Council on Vocational Education reported that 10,200 LEP adults were served at the post-secondary level during the 1985-86 school year, out of a total of 437,000 individuals. It was stated that LEP adults are enrolled in ESL classes, mainstreamed in regular vocational classes, and given extra help through classroom aides and tutors.

B. Texas Department of Commerce

Another agency involved in the provision of vocational training and other employment-related services is the Texas Department of Commerce which administers the JTPA program. Following the national initiative, coordination and joint planning of programs funded by JTPA and the Perkins Act is an important state priority. However, no state-wide policy has been established to provide services specifically for LEP adults, which are just one of several groups in need of services. Further, no state-level model or approach to serving LEP adults has been adopted. This is left up to the local service delivery areas. Individuals served by JTPA are not identified as LEP. Rather, they are identified as at-risk youth and adults in need of services. Further, no person or office at the Department of Commerce has responsibility for services to LEP adults. Therefore, there is no one to act as a catalyst to address their needs.

On the other hand, ESL is a primary activity paid for by JTPA funds through contracts with community colleges and other organizations. ESL is provided to prepare individuals to enter mainstream vocational programs.

C. Texas Education Agency

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is primarily responsible for education in grades K-12. As part of this responsibility, TEA administers adult basic and adult secondary education. These programs provide literacy, English language, and basic and secondary level academic skills for out-of-school youth and

adults who have less than secondary level competencies. Although not vocational in nature, these programs provide basic skills for employment and for becoming productive contributors to the economy. In 1986-87, over 204,000 out-of-school youth and adults were enrolled. Hispanics were the largest ethnic group served (51.4%). A total of 66,443 individuals were identified as limited English proficient upon entry. These individuals were enrolled in ESL and/or adult basic education (ABE) classes. Programming was the responsibility of the local school districts and adult education cooperatives. Funding for the programs are derived from the state and from the federal Adult Education Act. Amount of funding is based on student hours generated during the previous year and the number of eligible students based on the 1980 Census.

Although TEA is only responsible for secondary level vocational education (and not post-secondary training, which is the responsibility of the Higher Education Coordinating Board), some Perkins funds for adults is administered by the agency. These funds are for:

- adult training and retraining;
- apprenticeship training;
- community-based organization/local education agency vocational education support programs; and
- criminal offenders program.

The Adult Training and Retraining Program is targeted at individuals who are above the compulsory school age and belong to one of several groups defined as in need of services by the Perkins Act. LEP adults are not specifically targeted, although they may be included in one of the groups specified in the act.

The Apprenticeship Training Program provides job-skill apprenticeship training to prepare individuals who have completed high school or obtained a GED certificate. The program emphasizes on-the-job training. Along with Perkins funds, JTPA and state general revenue funds may be used by local education agencies for these programs. As with the above program, the state has not made LEP adults a priority target group of this program over other special needs groups.

Community-based organization/local education agency vocational education support programs are for outreach programs to encourage youth to enter vocational programs; attitudinal and motivational pre-vocational training; pre-vocational education and basic skills development in cooperation with businesses; pre-vocational programs targeted to inner-city youth, non-English speaking youth, and youth of other urban and rural areas with a high density of poverty; needs assessment, guidance, and counseling to assist students with selection of vocational programs.

The Criminal Offenders Programs provides vocational services to meet the special needs of individuals serving in correctional institutions. Local agencies apply for the programs and are funded based on these needs presented in their applications. Services are planned and implemented at the local agencies.

Although some LEP adults and out-of school youth may be served by these programs administered by the Texas Education Agency, none of the four specifically targets this population.

The next sections of this case study discuss services to LEP adults in two local jurisdictions: a large metropolitan area (Houston), and a smaller city (Lubbock).

IV. HOUSTON, TEXAS

A. LEP Adult Population

The City of Houston has a large population of people with language backgrounds other than English. Spanish-speakers are by far the largest non-English group. The latest 1980 Census data on language-minorities are summarized in Table 4. The data show that 20% of the population speak a language other than English at home. Almost 19% of the population is of Spanish origin, mostly Mexican.

Most respondents believed that the census data underestimate the present language-minority population. According to respondents, there are many recent immigrants in Houston. In addition, approximately 75,000 people in Houston applied for amnesty under the recent legislation; if a significant number of these individual were not counted in the census, this could have considerably influenced the reported numbers.

B. The Economy

According to the 1980 census, the unemployment rate in Houston was 3.6% overall, and 4.6% for persons of Spanish origin. These figures were better than the statewide averages of 4.0% overall and 6.4% for persons of Spanish origin.

Economic conditions in Houston have worsened dramatically in the past ten years. By 1986, the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey estimates of unemployment in the Houston Metropolitan Statistical Area were 10.9% overall and 15.4% for persons of Spanish origin. These compared unfavorably with statewide averages of 8.4% overall and 11.3% for persons of Spanish origin.

Although respondents reported that they thought that the worst of the economic downturn was over in Houston, the economy is still in a precarious position. The city government is facing serious budget deficits, and is in the process of making budget cuts which are producing political controversy.

TABLE 4

1980 CENSUS DATA: HOUSTON, TEXAS

Total population	1,595,167
Percentage who speak a language other than English at home	19.9
Percentage foreign born	9.3
Percentage naturalized citizens	2.9
Percentage not citizens	6.9
Percentage Spanish origin	17.6
Percentage Mexican origin	15.5
Percentage Puerto Rican origin	0.1
Percentage Cuban origin	0.3
Percentage other Spanish origin	1.6
Percentage Chinese	0.6
Percentage Vietnamese	0.5
Percentage Asian Indian	0.4
Percentage (13 and over) who speak Spanish at home	14.6

Within this context, respondents reported that local officials were aware of the need for additional vocational training for LEP and other adults, but that with budget constraints, no new local initiatives were possible. Many respondents are looking for additional federal support to assist Houston in economic recovery.

The language-minority population in Houston does not have a powerful voice in the affairs of the city. They are not well represented among elected officials, and Hispanic leaders feel that budget cuts have fallen particularly hard on Hispanic people. There is also some concern in the Hispanic community that non-Hispanic immigrants (especially the Vietnamese) have had access to government assistance which has not been available to Hispanic people. To the extent that refugee programs have assisted Southeast Asian immigrants, this perception is at least partially based on fact.

C. Organizations Providing Services

The major providers of vocational training services in Houston are the:

- Houston Community College System (HCCS) through its thirty campuses and other facilities;
- the 40 grantees of the Houston Job Training Partnership Council (HJTPC) (HCCS is one of these);
- the five employment and training grantees of the Texas Department of Human Services, which is funded through the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (HCCS is also one of these); and
- a broad range of proprietary schools.

1. Houston Community College System (HCCS)

The recipients of Perkins money in Houston are the Houston School District and Houston Community College System, although only the community college provides vocational training programs for adults. HCCS will receive a total of $1,132,763 of Perkins funds in 1988-1989. Of that amount, $75,764 has been formally allocated to LEP adults. That money will be used to provide translation and secretarial services to support the Bilingual Vocational Education Program, which is a demonstration program funded by the Bilingual Vocational Training Office within the U.S. Department of Education.

HCCS is the largest provider of ESL services for adults. It offers a college credit ESL sequence to approximately 1,000-1,500 students per year. It provides adult education level ESL for approximately 10,000 students per year, and it includes ESL as part of a Refugee Assistance Program for approximately 1,900 students per year. There is also a community service program in which HCCS works with community centers in providing special ESL courses in community center facilities (approximately 600 students per year).

These ESL programs differ in the extent to which they coordinate with vocational and other programs in HCCS. ESL offered as adult education or as part of the community service programs typically includes a unit on pre-vocational English (job applications, job interviews, etc.), and

teachers often interact with vocational training staff to be able to explain what vocational training programs are available on specific campuses. The Refugee Assistance Program has the most detailed coordination, in that refugee vocational counselors meet frequently with persons in the vocational education departments, and often provide out-of-class English assistance for persons taking vocational classes. The college credit ESL sequence has the least tie to vocational training.

HCCS offers a very broad range of vocational training opportunities in technical, business, and service occupation areas. With the exception of persons in the Bilingual Vocational Training Program, the Refugee Assistance Program, and the HCCS JTPA program (all of which will be described in detail later in this section), it is assumed that persons taking vocational courses are English-proficient. Although occasional courses are offered by bilingual instructors, there is no college-wide data on how many LEP adults are enrolled in vocational training courses, and how courses are being adapted to their needs.

2. Job Training Partnership Council

The Mayor's office is the JTPA grantee in Houston, and it works in partnership with the Private Industry Council. However, almost all services (recruitment, intake, training, etc.) are provided by a network of grantees. In 1987-1988, Houston received a total of approximately $26 million in JTPA funds, and served approximately 18,000 persons with those funds. Of the adults served, 19.5% were Hispanic and 10.7% were Asian. However, only 2.1% of those served were classified as limited English proficient by HJTPC. An official at the mayor's office reported that this figure significantly underestimated the actual population because only those who could not communicate at all in English were classified as LEP.

The JTPA program in Houston offers a broad range of services, including ESL, adult basic education, General Equivalency Diploma training, vocational classes, on-the-job training, and work experience activities. Individual contractors are given considerable flexibility in which services should be provided to which clients. For example, the HCCS JTPA program includes

adult basic education, GED training, ESL instruction, and vocational classes. A JTPA program offered by Houston International University includes ESL instruction, GED training, vocational classes, and pre-employment skill training. In general, JTPA programs include recruitment, intake assessment, career counseling, child care, and job placement, though the specific arrangements for these services vary among contractors.

3. Texas Department of Human Services

A major source of employment-related services for refugees is the Texas Department of Human Services through its local grantee system. In Texas, the first priority in terms of service provision is job placement assistance; the second priority is ESL instruction, with vocational training third. The Houston Community College System is the grantee for ESL and vocational training. Four other contractors provide job placement assistance. In Houston and its surroundary area, only 4% of the money from the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement goes into vocational training; approximately 30% goes for ESL. Approximately 450 clients have received vocational training services in the past year, and approximately 1900 have received ESL services.

4. Proprietary Schools

In addition to these providers, there are a large number of proprietary schools offering vocational training in Houston. No one was willing to estimate the number of LEP adults receiving training from these organizations, however.

D. Vocational Training Programs

Most vocational training programs being offered in the City of Houston are taught completely in English. Therefore, LEP adults are frequently directed towards ESL programs offered by the Houston Community College System or other providers. A few vocational programs focus specifically on LEP adults.

Four such programs are described below: (1) the HCCS Bilingual Vocational Education Program; (2) the HCCS Refugee Assistance Program; (3) the HCCS JTPA program; and (4) Houston International University's JTPA program.

1. HCCS Bilingual Vocational Education Program

This program is funded by the federal Bilingual Vocational Training Program and is administered through the community college system. It also receives indirect support through Title II, Part A Perkins funding, and receives some support from the state community college system. The enrollment at the beginning of the present term was 155 persons, all of whom were native Spanish speakers.

The program offers vocational training in four areas: (1) refrigeration and air conditioning; (2) diesel mechanics; (3) electricity and electrical repairs; and (4) cosmetology. The training is provided in three 16-week terms, five days a week, and from 7:00 AM to 1:00 PM each day. There are three components to the training: (1) two hours per day of theory and classroom training related to the vocation, offered almost completely in Spanish; (2) two hours of laboratory experience in the vocational area, in which much Spanish is used but there is pressure to use English; and (3) two hours of vocational ESL, in which English skills are taught as part of learning the English vocabulary of the vocational area. Each training group is split into three subgroups, which rotate separately through the three components. Thus, class size in any component is relatively small. The instructors for the theory and laboratory components are bilingual native-Spanish speakers, while vocational ESL is offered by a mix of bilingual native-English and native-Spanish speakers.

Recruitment for the program is through the Spanish media, through brochures, and through word-of-mouth. Intake includes testing in English skills (using the Basic English Skills Test), mechanical aptitude, and numerical skills. Applicants must have been residents of Houston for at least one year, and must be limited-English-proficient. Other test scores are used for instructional and not for selection purposes.

There is a counselor who is responsible for recruitment, vocational counseling, job development, and job placement. Placement rates were as high as 99%, but are now down to 71%. Participants in the program have access to other support services offered through HCCS (counseling, etc.), and are referred as appropriate for health and child care services. The cost per participant is approximately $1,000.

2. HCCS Refugee Assistance Program

This program is funded by the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement through the Texas Department of Human Services, and is administered by the community college system. It served a total of approximately 2,200 LEP adults in the past year, the largest percentage of whom were from Vietnam (approximately 65%). There were also significant numbers, however, from Cambodia, Laos, Afghanistan, and Ethiopia.

The most frequent instruction in the program is ESL, which is provided to approximately 1,900 participants per year. Approximately 450 participants are enrolled in vocational training programs offered by HCCS. A small percentage of individuals take ESL and vocational training concurrently. The most popular vocational areas are auto mechanics, air conditioning, auto body, cosmetology, and office technology. Students are enrolled in regular vocational classes (i.e., classes offered completely in English), but if they are having language difficulties, they may receive tutoring or language assistance from the program.

Recruitment for the program is through community outreach, radio, newspaper, and referrals. Intake includes assessment of eligibility, English language testing, and the development of an employment plan. Career and job counseling is provided, and referrals are made for child care and other social services.

3. HCCS JTPA Program

The community college system is one of the JTPA grantees in Houston. It provides adult basic education (ABE), GED preparation, vocational programs,

and ESL instruction. Most of those who are LEP are first directed to ESL, and then as needed or appropriate, they are provided ABE, GED, and vocational programs. There were 22 LEP adults enrolled in JTPA ESL programs at the time the case study data were collected.

The program as designed for LEP adults includes 16 weeks of ESL instruction, 9-10 weeks of ABE (if needed), 8 weeks of GED instruction (if needed), and 16-32 weeks of vocational classes. Recruitment for the program is through radio and newspapers (including Spanish media). Intake includes eligibility assessment and basic skills assessment on the TABE; a detailed vocational assessment approach is planned for the future.

Support services include a job developer and placement specialist, who can assist participants up to 90 days after the program is completed. Child care is provided through contracts with neighborhood centers, and participants receive bus tokens to attend training.

4. Houston International University JTPA Program

Houston International University (HIU) is a private institution which has a special emphasis on serving the needs of Hispanic residents of Houston. HIU has a JTPA grant under which it serves approximately 200 people, of which 35% are estimated to be Hispanic and most of the remaining 15% are Black or Asian. Approximately 50-60% of participants are considered to be limited English proficient.

HIU offers a vocational program in office skills that includes filing, bookkeeping, typing, telephone etiquette, and commercial English. Pre-employment skills (resumes, interviews, etc.) are also taught, and ESL and GED instruction are provided for those who need them. For those not requiring GED instruction, computer or word processing classes are available. The program consists of four 12-week cycles, typically running from July 1 to June 30. Classes meet five days a week for 7-8 hours per day. The instruction is in English, but all instructors are bilingual and provide some support in Spanish.

Recruitment is through television, radio, and direct contacts in clinics, schools, churches, and homes. Intake includes eligibility assessment, placement tests in English, math, and typing, and a voluntary questionnaire on personal background. Support services offered on-site include career counseling, job development, job placement, and child care. Participants also receive bus tokens, and are referred for economic assistance and health care. The costs per participant are approximately $2,600, and the recent placement rate is 69%.

E. Planning and Coordination

There appear to be few mechanisms for the planning and coordination of vocational services for LEP adults in Houston. There have been some discussions on the issue within the community college system, but the discussons were more at the awareness level than at the coordination and planning levels. The community college and JTPA grantees in Houston also have had some meetings with industry groups, but there was almost no focus on LEP adults during those meetings.

The one coordinating mechanism that was mentioned by respondents was a monthly meeting of refugee network organizations. All organizations receiving grants from the Texas Department of Human Services for refugees are required to send a representative to meetings. The group selects its own leadership, and is charged by the Department to make certain that services are complementary. A representative of the Department made a point, however, of distinguishing between complementary services (which are required) and coordinated services (which are not necessarily required). She suggested that she saw very little coordination.

At the client level, there is some case management-type coordination. The requirements for JTPA and refugee grantees include some case management activities, through no service providers labeled themselves as providing a comprehensive case management approach. In general, almost all respondents agreed that planning and coordination of vocational services for LEP adults in Houston could be greatly improved.

F. Additional Service Needs

When respondents were asked about gaps in vocational training programs for LEP adults in Houston, there was a broad range of responses. The most frequently mentioned gap was in the health field, where the need for nurses and other health professionals was emphasized. Two respondents indicated the need for upgrading and licensing of nursing skills learned in other countries, while two respondents specifically mentioned the need for bilingual personnel in hospital and other health settings.

The range of other training needs which were mentioned included bilingual paralegals, bilingual secretaries and receptionists, bilingual aides in schools, word processors, computer operators, cashiers, air conditioning repair persons, carpenters, machinists, and auto mechanics. Training is currently being provided to LEP adults in some of these areas, but respondents felt additional job opportunities are available and additional training is appropriate. Two respondents suggested that the federal amnesty program would place a very large strain on resources attempting to provide ESL instruction, and that such a strain would soon also appear on vocational training opportunities. Although there were some differences of opinion, many respondents appeared to agree with a source in the community college system who said there was "a canyon of need" for additional vocational training for LEP adults.

V. LUBBOCK, TEXAS

Lubbock is located in the South Plains region of Western Texas. Its population, according to the 1980 U.S. Census, was 175,373. Its present population (1988) is about 200,000. The Lubbock economy is mainly agricultural, with cotton being the primary crop. Texas Tech University, Reece Air Force Base, the Lubbock School District, several area hospitals and related health enterprises are the major employers.

A. LEP Adult Population

About 19% of the Lubbock population was of Spanish origin in 1980. Its Hispanic population is now estimated to be almost 22%. Almost all of the Hispanics are of Mexican descent. According to the 1980 Census, the percentage of individuals that speaks a language other than English at home is 19.5%. The percentage of the population (18 and older) who speak Spanish at home is approximately 15%.

TABLE 5
1980 CENSUS DATA: LUBBOCK, TEXAS

Total Population (urbanized area)	175,373
Percentage who speak a language other than English at home	19.5
Percentage foreign born	3.0
Percentage naturalized citizens	1.3
Percentage Spanish origin	18.8
Percentage Mexican origin	17.8
Percentage (18 and over) who speak Spanish at home	14.7

B. The Economy

Median family income for 1988, estimated by the City Planning Department, is $31,648, about equal to the overall state estimate of $31,827. According to the 1980 Census, the median household income in Lubbock was $15,709, compared to $16,708 for the entire state. The percentage of families living below the poverty level in 1979 was 9.7%, which compares favorably to the statewide figure of 11.1%.

The economic situation in Lubbock reflects the general downtown in recent years in the overall Texas economy, due primarily to the worldwide decrease in oil prices. It has not been affected as much as some other Texas towns, however, and the situation is improving. Unemployment in January 1988 was 6.0%, compared to 6.8% one year previously. This figure was one of the lowest among the larger cities in Texas.

The labor force in Lubbock for January 1988 was 110,900, 1.2% over the previous year. The combination of the larger labor force and the lower unemployment rate resulted in a 2.1% increase in the number of people employed in January 1988 over January 1987. On the negative side however, the construction industry was continuing to experience hard times. All in all, the Lubbock economy currently is mixed, with some signs of recovery but some indications that the decline of a few years ago has not yet been reversed.

C. Organizations Providing Services

There did not seem to be any agencies or organizations providing vocational services targeted specifically for the LEP adult population. Agencies routinely refer LEP adults to ESL programs offered by the adult education program at the school district. However, agencies providing vocational training services for adults in general include the following:

1. South Plains College at Lubbock

This is a vocational/technical branch of South Plains College at Levelland, and part of the community college system in Texas. It offers vocational

programs in many areas. These include courses for associate degrees in applied science, courses leading to one-year vocational certificates, and short courses in various job-related areas. There is also a First-Step Program which offers career exploration and job counseling and placement for single parents and homemakers who are entering or re-entering the job market. None of these courses are designed specifically for LEP adults. Applicants who are limited English proficient are referred to ESL programs offered by the adult education program at the school district. There is no ESL program offered at the college. The college has a total enrollment of 1,000 students. Although 23% of the students are Hispanic, the respondents did not know what proportion come from homes in which Spanish is spoken as the first language.

The college received $39,234 last year in Perkins funds under the disadvantaged set-aside and $352 for LEP adults. Some of this money was not used and therefore turned back. This was done because of Perkins guidelines which stipulate that equipment and materials purchased under disadvantaged dollars cannot be used by other students. In addition, the college has not budgeted any of its own funds to serve the disadvantaged. Thus, matching of Perkins disadvantaged funds is a problem. Allocations for the disadvantaged this year increased to $66,366, while no money was allocated for LEP adults. Respondents indicated that the college will not be able to spend all of the disadvantaged allocation and will again turn some money back. No planning has been undertaken to provide special services for LEP adults. Apparently, the need for such services has not been identified.

2. <u>The Lubbock Public Schools</u>

The school system, through its adult education program, provides programming in six areas. These are:

- Adult Basic Education;
- GED;
- ESL;
- Evening High School classes for drop-outs;
- Vocational Training in Office Occupations; and
- Community Education.

The Office Occupations program is the only program receiving Perkins funding. This funding is from that part of the Act which targets adults in need of training or retraining. It is an open entry/open exit program which teaches typing, filing, and computer skills. The program is targeted at the general population and the teachers are all monolingual English speakers. If a prospective student is limited-English proficient, and in the judgment of the teachers cannot communicate in the classroom, he or she is enrolled in ESL before being enrolled in the vocational program. If a prospective student can communicate to some extent in English, he or she is allowed to enroll in the vocational program and is given additional help with English through the ESL program. In this case, the vocational and ESL instructors do some joint planning and direct the ESL curriculum to be somewhat job related, mainly by concentrating on business vocabulary. No vocational instructional materials are available in languages other than English, except for some dictionaries. The vocational program does not include a formal job placement component, but teachers try to help students find jobs. In addition, some employers notify the program of job openings.

The ESL program operated by the adult education program is the largest (if not the only) program in the Lubbock area targeted at the LEP adult population. No tuition is charged; it operates with state and local funding. The program serves mostly Spanish speakers, but also persons who speak a variety of other languages. These latter individuals are largely spouses of servicemen stationed at nearby Reece Air Force Base.

The adult basic education, GED, and evening high school programs are operated with state and federal funds. The community education program is operated through tuition charges and is non-profit. These programs serve the general population. All LEP adults are referred to the ESL program before they are enrolled in these programs.

3. The JTPA Program

This program is operated by the Texas Employment Commission. Groups targeted by JTPA are: battered women, displaced homemakers, teen-aged parents, school drop-outs, handicapped persons, and dislocated farmers and

ranchers. LEP adults are not identified as a specific target group. The JTPA program does not receive any Perkins funding. On-the-job training is the most frequently used service model, but the program also contracts for training services with South Plains College, Methodist Hospital School of Nursing, Reece AFB, and Texas Tech University. According to respondents, LEP adults constitute only a small number of JTPA applicants. Those that apply generally need extensive basic skills training in addition to English instruction; they are referred to the adult education program at the school district. A total of five LEP adults and two LEP youths were served by the JTPA program between July 1987 and April 1988. They were assigned to OJT with employers in the Hispanic community where English language proficiency was not a requirement.

4. Texas Schools

This private vocational school offers vocational training in automative technology, welding technology, refrigeration and air conditioning, auto body repair, truck driver training, and electronics maintenance. The majority of the student population is Hispanic, but all students must demonstrate the ability to speak and read English. Some exceptions are made, but the school does not target the LEP population. If a LEP individual applies, respondents said the student would be accepted and given additional instruction including help with reading skills which focus on completing the vocational program. However, remedial instruction in reading and math is available to all students. It was reported that half of the instructors are bilingual in English and Spanish and use Spanish informally from time to time to help out those students in need. However, knowledge of Spanish is not an employment criteria for instructors; all classes are taught in English; and no materials are available in the Spanish language. The school does not offer any training services to instructors to help them deal with LEP students.

The school has a job development coordinator who helps place students in jobs. An advisory council composed of business persons in the community assists with this process. An 80% placement rate was reported.

Students' tuition is generally fully covered by Pell grants and federally-guaranteed student loans. Tuition ranges from $3,800-$5,400 for programs which are six months long.

5. Apprenticeship Programs

Another source of vocational and employment-related training available in the Lubbock area are apprenticeship programs offered by the local unions. These are small programs and, in conversations with the heads of apprenticeship programs at two unions, it was reported these programs do not have the ability to serve LEP individuals. Applicants are required to possess a high school diploma or GED. None of the two unions reported having applicants who were limited English proficient. The respondents said they would suggest that any LEP adult or youth enroll in an ESL program before applying for the apprenticeship program.

D. Planning and Coordination

Vocational services for LEP adults has not been identified as a special need in Lubbock. Perkins money for LEP adults is distributed within the community college system in Texas, but the local community college in Lubbock does not target this special group and therefore uses very little of these funds. In fact, most of the money it does receive has been turned back in recent years.

It appears that the only employment-related services available to LEP adults is the ESL program offered by the school district's adult education program. The community college, the JTPA program, and other organizations offering vocational services all refer their LEP adult applicants to the adult education programs for ESL. Thus, it seems that the ESL program is highly visible, but no planning and coordination of services appears to be taking place, other than these referrals.

On the other hand, it was reported that there has been little demand for vocational and employment-related services by LEP adults, nor from the Hispanic

community as a whole. There is a demand for English language instruction and the community as a whole is concerned that people learn English. However, LEP adults have not been singled out as a group needing vocational services.

E. Additional Service Needs

It was reported that child care is an important service needed by LEP adults. This would enable them to attend classes without worrying about their children. Another reported area of need was job counseling. People need to be exposed to the range of job opportunities available in order to find ones which match their interests. Additionally, training in job-related behavior is an important area which needs to be addressed. These include such matters as how to fill out an employment application, how to conduct oneself during an interview, and how to dress and behave on the job, including the importance of punctuality and attendance.